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BUSINESS

Tesla now employs 20,000 in Austin, could triple that as it ramps up Cybertruck production

By **Eric Killelea**, Staff writer
Updated Sep 25, 2023 3:54 p.m.



Employees at Tesla's factory in Austin pose in mid-July with a Cybertruck the company said was the first to be built at its Gigafactory Texas in Austin. A company official says the plant now employs about 20,000 people — and that number is expected to triple.
Tesla/Courtesy



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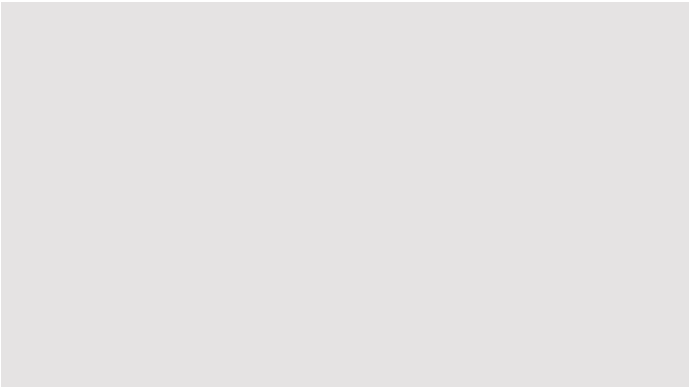
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Tesla Inc. now employs 20,000 people at its plant near Austin and has the potential to triple that as it's quickly become one of the largest employers in Central Texas, the [Austin Regional Manufacturers Association](#) said.



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The electric vehicle maker has added more than 7,700 employees since the start of the year, when it had just shy of 12,300, according to the Texas-based company's [annual compliance report](#) to Travis County economic development officials. Tesla's growth in Texas has been rapid; it reported about 3,500 employees there in 2021, the year it began production.

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Current employment was disclosed last week by the plant's director of manufacturing during a meeting of the manufacturers association.

With this year's new hires, Elon Musk-led Tesla is now Austin's second-largest private employer, just behind San Antonio's H-E-B, which earlier this year reported 22,955 employees in Austin, according to the [Austin Business Journal](#). Dell Technologies employed 13,000 workers in the metro last year, according to [filings with the U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission](#).

REFILED: Heading toward Cybertruck, Tesla triples employment and builds 4,000



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Tesla now is stepping up its hiring efforts to push employment to 60,000 at its sprawling Austin plant as it continues producing its Model Y mid-sized SUV and ramps up production of its long-delayed Cybertruck.

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The disclosure reportedly was made by Jason Shawhan, Tesla's director of manufacturing, when he spoke at the manufacturers association's [2023 State of Manufacturing Conference and Expo](#) last week.

Neither Tesla nor the Austin Regional Manufacturers Association responded to requests for comment Monday.

845 openings

As of Monday morning, Tesla had about 845 job openings listed in Texas on its [website](#). Most of those were based in Austin.

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Among them are Austin metro area-based positions for manufacturing engineers, construction managers, supply chain parts advisors, environmental specialists, project designers for the company's solar and EV charging stations, attorneys — even an [athletic trainer](#) to focus on “setting the right conditions of work — from manufacturing and maintenance to sales and service.”

RELATED: [Tesla continues growth, will lease 1 million square feet in Hays County industrial park](#)

Tesla relocated to Texas from California in 2021 and began limited production of the Model Y at its sprawling factory later that year. By the end of 2022, the company said it had invested \$5.81 billion into the sprawling facility.

Development has continued in 2023. In January, Tesla said it was planning to spend \$775 million on five construction projects covering 1.5 million square feet of its land off Texas 45 and U.S. 130 near Austin-Bergstrom International Airport. It also plans to open a new cathode production facility at the site this year. Cathodes are a key component for the batteries that power its electric vehicles.

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Musk also told investors the company had installed Cybertruck production equipment at the Texas plant in anticipation of kicking off production this summer and ramping up manufacturing efforts by 2024.

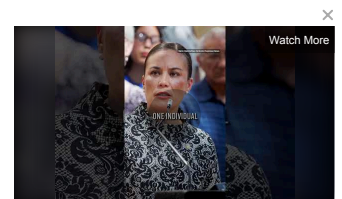
As Tesla moves toward production of the long-delayed pickup, the company on Monday had 65 Austin job openings specifically related to manufacture of the stainless-steel electric truck.

Elsewhere in Texas

The company also is building a \$375 million lithium refinery in Robstown, near Corpus Christi. Musk has said it would begin producing enough of the material for batteries in about 1 million EVs a year by 2025.

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As of Monday, Tesla had 39 job openings in Robstown.

RELATED: [Greg Abbott and Elon Musk celebrate construction of Tesla's lithium refinery in South Texas](#)

Tesla's hiring push comes as tech giants with offices in the Austin area have been laying off workers. Google, Microsoft, Amazon, Facebook parent Meta and Dell all have announced cuts. It also reflects Musk's expanding business footprint across the state.

Hawthorne, Calif.-based SpaceX, where Musk is CEO, had about 1,700 employees at its Starbase facility in Boca Chica in April, according to former Brownsville Mayor Juan "Trey" Mendez III.

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As of Monday, SpaceX was advertising 103 openings for its Starship program in Boca Chica and eight at its rocket testing site in McGregor, near Waco.

Other Musk-owned businesses with Texas operations — tunneling firm The Boring Co. and brain implant company Neuralink — also were advertising dozens of job openings Monday.

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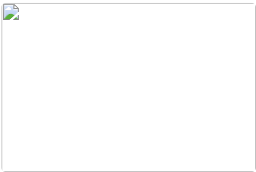
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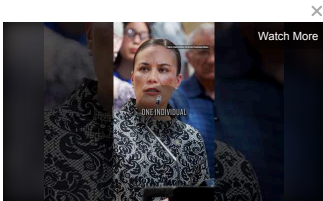
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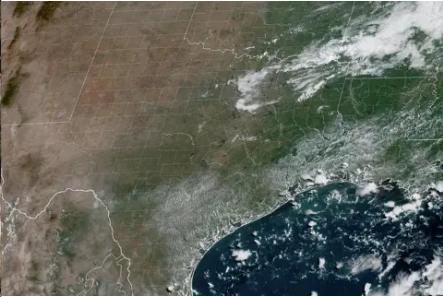
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